



State of Louisiana

Department of Environmental Quality

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Governor

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COURT APPROVES \$6.33 MILLION LOUISIANA SETTLEMENT WITH WILLAMETTE INDUSTRIES TO SETTLE CLEAN AIR ACT CASE

A Federal district court in Oregon has approved a consent decree with Willamette Industries. The Consent Decree resolves a Complaint filed by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and others against Willamette in the Federal district court in Oregon. The Consent Decree requires Willamette to pay Louisiana \$6.33 million to settle the suit alleging that Willamette failed to control the amount of air pollution released from its wood products factories at six Louisiana sites. The Louisiana locations include Dodson, Ruston, Zwolle, Lillie, Simsboro and Taylor. Louisiana will receive \$3.66 million in penalties that, by law, will be deposited into the state's Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Fund. Another \$2.67 million will be used for beneficial environmental projects through the state's Community Development Block Grant Program. Willamette Industries will eventually spend \$31 million in Louisiana on additional pollution control devices.

This national settlement was reached between the company and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Justice Department, the Environmental Protection Agency and two other states. The settlement resolves allegations, contained in complaints that were filed along with the agreement, that Willamette failed to install pollution controls, accurately report air emissions, and obtain air emissions permits for 13 of its facilities. As a result, thousands of tons of pollution were illegally released into the air. The assessment against the company of a total of \$11.2 million in penalties is the largest ever for factory emissions of air pollution. The agreement also requires the Portland-based company to spend an additional \$8 million on beneficial environmental projects nationwide.

"The settlement will improve air quality in the state of Louisiana," according to Bruce Hammatt, Enforcement Administrator at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. "The environmental projects will fund much needed public sewer system improvements in the parishes of Winn, Union, Lincoln, Bienville and Sabine."

The settlement covers more facilities than any other case ever brought under the Clean Air Act. Under the Clean Air Act, companies in certain designated areas must install air pollution controls before building new plants or modifying old ones.
